

CLAIMS

We claim:

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1. A method of providing access to information comprising the steps of:
- a) receiving a call from an application program, said call specifying a user identifier and a requested set of information of a plurality of sets of information, wherein said set of requested information comprises a plurality of fields and wherein said fields describe information distributed over a plurality of databases;
- 10 b) determining the location of said requested information corresponding to said user identifier;
- c) using said user identifier, retrieving information corresponding to a first of said plurality of fields from a first of said plurality of databases;
- d) using said user identifier, retrieving information corresponding to a second of said plurality of fields from a second of said plurality of databases; and
- 15 e) providing said set of information to said application program.
2. The method of Claim 1 further comprising the steps of:
- f) determining the entitlement status corresponding to said user identifier with respect to said set of information.
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3. The method of Claim 1 further comprising the steps of:
- f) storing in a cache a set of information which was requested by said application program; and
- g) if a pre-determined time has passed since said set of information was
- 25 accessed, removing said set of information from said cache.

4. The method of Claim 1 further comprising the step of:

f) updating a first of said plurality of fields in said set of said information by writing information to a first of said plurality of databases.

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5. The method of Claim 4 wherein said update is based upon responses given by a user of said application program.

6. The method of Claim 4 wherein said update is based upon monitoring activity of a user of said application program, said activity being related to said information.

7. The method of Claim 1 wherein said databases comprise a first database with entitlement information thereon and a second database with user profile information thereon.

8. The method of Claim 1 further comprising the steps of:
f) providing a parameter to said application program; and
g) said application program passing said parameter when requesting user profile data.

9. The method of Claim 1 further comprising the step of:

f) moving the information corresponding to a first of said plurality of fields from a first of said plurality of databases to a second of said plurality of databases.

10. A computer readable medium having stored thereon program instructions for providing access to information stored on a plurality of databases:
- said program operable to logically map a plurality of fields of said information into a plurality of logical collections of said information, wherein at least one said logical collections comprise a plurality of said fields of said information;
- said program further operable to process requests from an application program, said requests identifying a first of said plurality of logical collections of said information and a first of a plurality of users;
- said program further operable to physically map said plurality of fields of said information to said plurality of databases, wherein said program is operable to determine which of said plurality of databases contain at least a first of said plurality of fields of said information corresponding to said first of said plurality of logical collections of said information for said first of said plurality of users; and
- said program further operable to retrieve said information corresponding to said at least said first of said plurality of fields, said information corresponding to said user identified by said request from said application program.
11. The computer readable medium of Claim 10 wherein said plurality of databases comprises a first database and a second database.
12. The computer readable medium of Claim 11 wherein said first database comprises entitlement information.

13. The computer readable medium of Claim 11 wherein said second database comprises user profile information.
- 5 14. The computer readable medium of Claim 10 wherein said program is further operable to store said requested set of information and to remove said requested set of information if it has not been accessed for a pre-determined period of time.
- 10 15. The computer readable medium of Claim 10 wherein said program is further operable to update said information for said first of said logical collections of said information by writing to a first of said plurality of databases.
- 15 16. The computer readable medium of Claim 10 wherein said physical mapping further maps said plurality of fields of said information to a database which is external to a system in which said computer readable medium resides.
17. The computer readable medium of Claim 10 wherein said information relates to a single user.
- 20 18. The computer readable medium of Claim 10 wherein said information comprises information pertaining to a group of users.
- 25 19. In a computer system having a processor coupled to a bus, a computer readable medium coupled to said bus and having stored therein a computer

program that when executed by said processor causes said computer system to implement a method for providing access to information stored in a plurality of databases, said method comprising the steps of:

- 5 a) receiving a call from an application program, said call specifying a user identifier and a requested set of information of a plurality of sets of information, wherein said set of requested information comprises a plurality of fields and wherein said fields describe information distributed over said plurality of databases;
- 10 b) determining the location of said requested information corresponding to said user identifier;
- c) using said user identifier, retrieving information corresponding to a first of said plurality of fields from a first of said plurality of databases;
- d) using said user identifier, retrieving information corresponding to a second of said plurality of fields from a second of said plurality of databases; and
- 15 e) providing said set of information to said application program.

20. The computer readable medium of Claim 19 wherein said method further comprises the step of:

- 20 f) determining the entitlement status corresponding to said user identifier with respect to said set of information.

21. The computer readable medium of Claim 19 wherein said method further comprises the steps of:

- 25 f) updating a second of said plurality of fields in said set of said information by writing information to a first of said plurality of databases.

22. The computer readable medium of Claim 19 wherein said method further comprises the steps of:

5 f) storing in a cache a set of information which was requested by said application program; and

g) if a pre-determined time has passed since said set of information was accessed, removing said set of information from said cache.

23. The computer readable medium of Claim 19 wherein said requested set of
10 information comprises information relating to a single user.

24. The computer readable medium of Claim 19 wherein said requested set of information comprises information relating to a group of users.

15 25. Means for providing access to information stored on a plurality of databases each having thereon a plurality of fields of information for a plurality of users, comprising:

means for logically mapping said fields of information onto a plurality of logical collections of said information, wherein at least one said logical collections
20 comprise a plurality of said fields of said information;

means for processing requests from an application program, said requests identifying a first of said plurality of logical collections of said information and a first of said plurality of users;

25 means for physically mapping said plurality of fields of said information to said plurality of databases, wherein said program is operable to determine which

of said plurality of databases contain said fields of said information corresponding to said first of said plurality of logical collections of said information for said first of said plurality of users; and

means for retrieving said information corresponding to said fields, said
5 information corresponding to said user identified by said request from said application program.

26. The means of Claim 25 further comprising means for storing said requested set of information and removing said requested set of information if it has not been
10 accessed for a pre-determined period of time.

27. The means of Claim 25 further comprising means for updating said information for said first of said logical collections of said information by writing to a first of said plurality of databases.

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